

Vaccination in children – attitudes of respondents in Zadar County

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Introduction: Vaccination or active immunization belongs to the greatest achievements of medical science. It is an important measure of prevention of infectious diseases.

Objective: To investigate attitudes of young parents on the vaccination of their own children and compare them to the attitudes of their parents. To identify sources of information and influence on forming opinions about vaccination in the County of Zadar.

Participants and methods: The research was conducted in the six general practice and pediatric medical clinics in Zadar County. It included 300 volunteers, 150 younger and 150 older ages. The survey questionnaire investigated attitudes, experiences and knowledge about vaccination. The survey data obtained were statistically processed.

Results: The 300 participants were divided into younger and older age groups. Most of the respondents were married, employed, with high school education and good economic status, often with two children and living in the city. Generally, the attitude towards vaccination is positive and most of the participants' children are vaccinated without difficulties. Healthcare workers made the most important influence on the decision for vaccination. The respondents were satisfied with the support and cooperation of healthcare workers. The younger age group is significantly affected by social networks and the internet. They want more information about vaccination, and they fear adjuvants in vaccines. Older respondents think that vaccination must be legally regulated. They believe that the greatest benefit of vaccination is the children themselves. They do not believe in negative media writings.

Conclusion: Our respondents generally have a positive attitude towards vaccination, notice the benefits of vaccinating children, and consider that untreated children represent a risk for the community. They are well informed and satisfied with the collaboration with medical professionals, although have the media and social networks have some impact on attitudes.

Key words: vaccination, vaccines, children, respondents, attitudes